5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

coast. I was informed by Captain Morton, of whom the persevering reader will know more hereafter, that he had touched at Sea Bear Bay for a harbor, and saw there great quantities of iron pumps, ships' hanging knees, and other gear, from wrecks of vessels of all sizes. As he was bound for the land of gold, he thought it scarcely worth his while to collect the baser metals. Had he been homeward bound, he might have obtained a valuable cargo.

As ornaments, bits of brass and copper, of silver and German silver, have a high value among the Indians, and when the metals are plenty such adornment is very common. The children's shoes have small oval pieces sewed on in front, and they appear on other parts of their dress. When scarce, they are more seldom seen. Blacksmithing in Patagonia is something of the rudest. Two hard flat stones do duty, the one as anvil, and the other as hammer. Of the effect of heat in making the metals malleable, and of the art of tempering, the people have no knowledge. To make a knife, they take a piece of iron hoop, or iron in any practicable shape, and hammer away upon it at a provokingly slow rate. Their blows are not heavy enough to do much execution; but they keep up a constant tap, tap, tap, hour by hour, till the iron is flattened to the required shape and dimensions. It is then rubbed on a smooth stone till it is worn down to an edge, and finally inserted into a wooden handle. Sometimes melted lead is poured into the handle, but lead appeared to be a scarce commodity. All mechanic arts, if they deserve the name, are in an equally rude and primitive stage. The simplicity of these people's ideas is indeed extraordinary. In invention or constructiveness they are babes. A Yankee boy, six

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

481 years old, would be a prodigy among them, — a miracle of genius.

291 294 An opportunity was afforded, while in camp, to see some specimens of their tailoring or mantua-making achievements; — either term is appropriate, as the male and female dress do not differ in form, and but slightly in the mode of adjustment. The mantle or blanket is worn around the shoulders; those of the women are fastened together by the corners under the chin with a stick for a pin; the men hold theirs around them with their hands, except that when hunting they tie a string around the waist.

281 294 The skins of young guanacos are selected for mantles, on account of the superior fineness and softness of the hair. Nearly a dozen skins are used for a single mantle, as a large part of each is esteemed unfit for use, and thrown away. The skins, while green, are stretched to their utmost tension on the ground to dry. When partially dried, they are scraped on the inside with a stone sharpened like a gun-flint, sprinkled the while with water, to facilitate the operation. *When the surface is made tolerably smooth*, and of a pretty uniform thickness, it is actively scoured with a coarse-grained stone, till it has a bright polish. The skin is again dried, then crumpled and twisted in the hands till it becomes perfectly soft and pliable. The

283 294 thread, as has been stated, is made from the sinews of the ostrich. These are extracted by the exertion of great strength, and divided into strings about the size of ordinary shoe-thread. They are then twisted, the ends are scraped to a point, and when dry become stiff; they are now ready for use.